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IRISH TRANSATLANTIC PACKET STATION.

REPORT OF THE DUBLIN COMMITTEE CONSIDERED,

AND

MR. WHITESIDE'S STATEMENT REVIEWED,

WITH REMARKS ON THE RELATIVE ADVANTAGES

OF THE

SHANNON AND GALWAY BAY.

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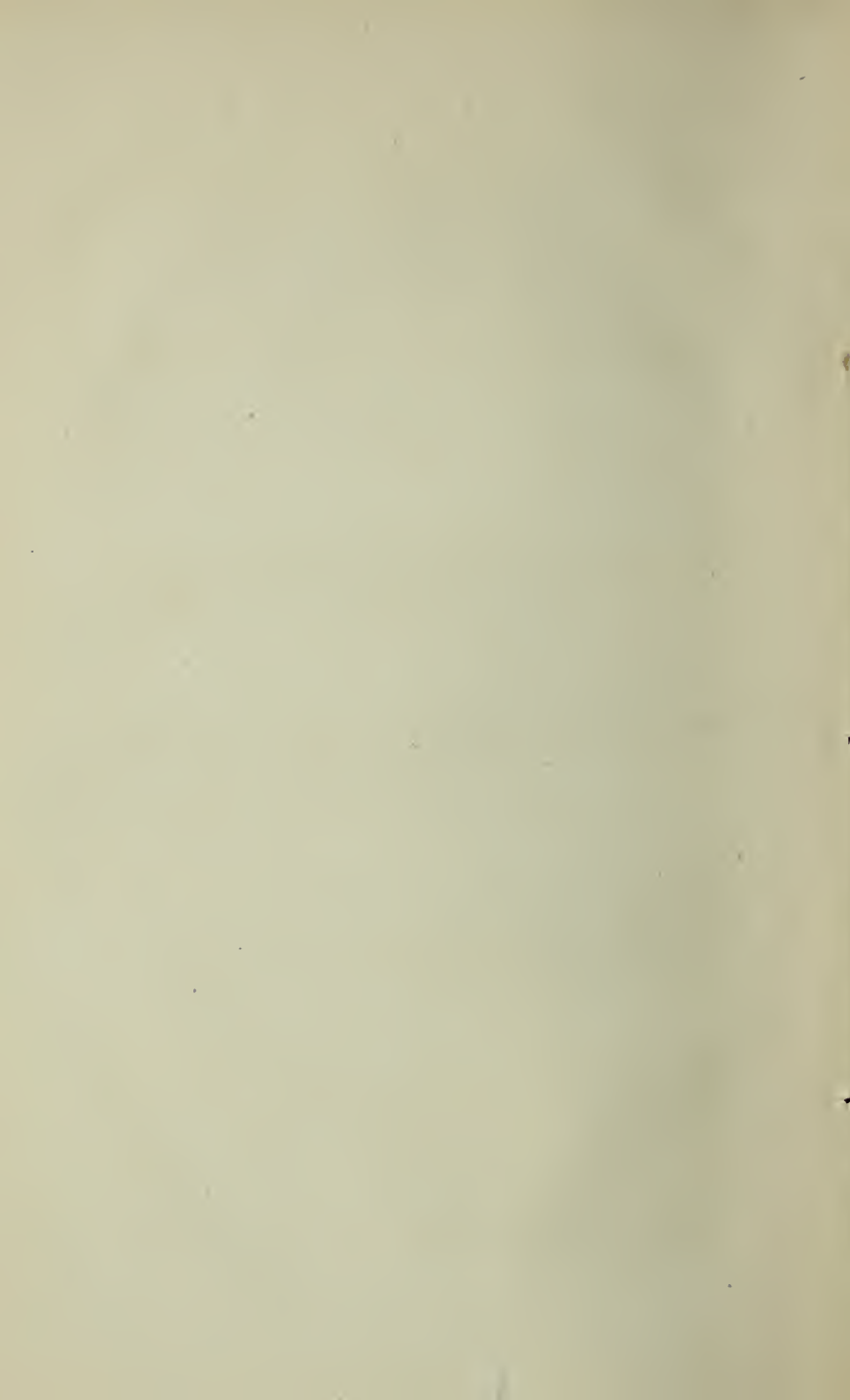
"I did not fail to remark the capacities of your noble river, navigable by steam for two hundred miles. I also made such observations as I could in our rapid passage on the Harbour of Foynes, which seemed to me capable of being reached at any time of the tide, and of affording shelter, with a sufficient depth of water, to the largest ships. I observed also a pier and a wharf for large steamers, and I was particularly struck with the magnificent dock under construction at Limerick, which when finished must prove of the greatest advantage to your interesting city."—HON. ABBOT LAWRENCE, *Minister for the United States.*

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IRISH TRANSATLANTIC PACKET STATION.

THE Report of the Committee appointed last August in Dublin, to inquire into the expediency of forming an Irish Transatlantic Packet Company, has now been some weeks before the public, and the readers of that important document cannot fail to observe the intelligence and general impartiality with which the inquiry of the Committee has been conducted, and, what is of equal if not still greater importance, the prudent conclusions with which they have terminated their labours. The Committee, it appears, have collected information from every source, and after a deliberate and calm inquiry, they have arrived at the conclusion, that the general question of the expediency of a Packet Station on the coast of Ireland admits of no reasonable doubt; that the mode in which the subject had been treated by the late Packet Station Commission did not possess the confidence of the country; that topics of paramount national importance have been overlooked; and the interests of this great commercial empire, no less than those of the whole civilized world, demand the early realization of this project. As regards the expediency of forming an Irish Steam Packet Company, with a capital of £500,000, as suggested by the Dublin Meeting, it should be remembered, that two powerful Companies at present exist in Liverpool alone, subsidized by their respective governments, having a well appointed fleet of steamers, and that for a new association to rush into unequal competition with companies so sustained, would be most unwise;

that without the support of the state, granted for the transmission of the mails, (an object fully justifying the appropriation of national funds,) it would be most hazardous; that the safest course appeared to be, to test the question by the experiment of a first-class vessel, in order to convince the Government and the English people by the practical result; and that although this would be productive of some delay, yet that such delay was preferable to a contest, premature and unequal, leading to defeat. Such is the result of an inquiry, conducted by men of high mercantile character, and the country will read their Report with deep interest, and will feel bound to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the Committee for the patient and laborious attention which has been bestowed upon the inquiry.

But whilst the Report itself is distinguished by all the impartiality which the supporters of the different rival ports could desire, it is much to be regretted that the interests involved in a question, upon which the people of Ireland have so strongly fixed their hopes, should have been risked by the indiscreet zeal of a member of the Committee, who, displaying the ingenuity of an able advocate, where the faculties of a judge would have been more appropriate, has applied his high talent in pleading the cause of a particular port, with all the zeal which he could have displayed for his most favoured client. However highly his professional abilities are estimated, the public, in a case like the present, would prefer the testimony of one experienced navigator or scientific engineer, to all the subtle sophistry of the Four Courts, or of Westminster Hall. Nor is the learned gentleman's want of nautical or engineering knowledge supplied by local information; for it does not appear that he has ever visited the Shannon, against which noble estuary he so dogmatically decides.

The resolutions of the public meeting clearly define the subject of inquiry referred to the Committee, namely, the consideration of the general question, of a western harbour, without reference to the selection of any one particular port; for the determination of which latter point, it was quite obvious the Committee were not a competent tribunal. It was a question demanding the utmost skill of the engineer, and the experience of the seaman; but yet

here we find a learned gentleman, necessarily more familiar with points of law than with the points of the compass—with the dicta of judges, than with Admiralty charts—with the orders of court, than with sailing directions, who “rushes in where pilots fear to tread.” Had the learned lawyer listened to the friendly advice and gentle remonstrance of the distinguished commercial gentlemen, his colleagues in this important inquiry, it would have been more prudent. *Cuivis creditur in arte sua*, is a wise legal maxim; and if the experienced mercantile members of the Committee had undertaken to determine an abstruse question of the law of real property, it is not very likely that they would have increased their high and well merited reputation. A careful summing up of the evidence taken before the Commissioners would, indeed, have been most important. But this would have been the function of a judge, and not that of an advocate. To weigh the claims and defend the rights of Ireland was surely a nobler office than to appear as counsel for the Ten Tribes. It is true the Committee have found themselves compelled publicly to disown any participation in the report offered to them by their learned colleague, and the author might, under ordinary circumstances, be left to the inferences suggested by their disclaimer; but where a report is circulated on the authority of a high name—a report which, professing to deal with facts, quotes exclusively from the evidence which answers its own purpose, it becomes indispensable that the public should have the fairest opportunity given them of weighing the testimony on the other side of the question.

Before proceeding to examine the report presented by the learned advocate, but treated somewhat uncere- moniously by the Committee, it may be well to state, that the whole of the Committee were invited during their inquiry, to visit the two ports, of the Shannon and Galway, selected by the Royal Commissioners as possessing the highest qualifications for Transatlantic purposes. Almost all the members of the Committee took advantage of this opportunity of making themselves acquainted with our harbours: in this tour of duty they were, however, unaided by their learned brother. When some authentic documents respecting the siege of Malta were offered to

the historian Vertot, he rejected them, saying, "*mon siège est fait.*" His report was already written. "Facts," says the proverb, "are stubborn things," and therefore are, like other stubborn things, better avoided. But where facts are avoided, it is somewhat rash, that a conclusive opinion should be expressed. In the present case it should be borne in mind, that it is the very individual who disdained to visit our ports, and to whom their capabilities are even still unknown, who separates himself from his colleagues on the Committee, and presents himself to the public as the fittest person to adjudicate between the nautical advantages of different harbours.

The course adopted by the learned gentleman presents a contrast with the more comprehensive views of Lord Monteagle, whose letters appear in the appendix to the Report. It surely would have been more logical to have exhibited the injustice done to the general case of Ireland by the Commissioners' Report—an injustice done by their errors, and still more by their omissions—than to have undertaken the more limited and less generous task of advocating a local interest. The foundation of all expectation of success lies in demonstrating that it is for the interest of Great Britain as well as of Ireland, of our noble Colonies no less than of the United States, that the acceleration of the correspondence should be effected without delay. This was a service to Ireland which it would have been glorious to have accomplished, and creditable to have attempted. It would have been a work worthy of a patriot and a statesman. This great opportunity was unfortunately missed by Mr. Whiteside; and his error, besides producing other evils, has rendered this somewhat controversial reply indispensable, for where one party has spoken, it is but justice that the other should be heard.

In stating the grounds upon which Mr. Whiteside bases the claims of Galway "for the approval or disapproval of his fellow-citizens," much stress is laid upon an imaginary network of projected railways, put forward for public notice and patronage. These railways, it appears, are to radiate from Galway as a centre, and are to extend in all directions throughout the country: one of eighty-one miles in length to Armagh; another of forty-five miles to Londonderry; another, about sixty miles, to Limerick; another of fifty

or sixty miles to Sligo; the whole involving an expenditure of about two millions and a half sterling—a startling estimate to provide for, in the judgment of practical men like the commercial members of the Committee who inquired into this subject in Dublin. But two or three millions form but a slight obstacle in the eyes of this zealous advocate. He describes these lines as if they were at present in actual operation, and adding the functions of the poet to those of the lawyer, confounds the past, present, and future. These lines, for the most part, would run in directions transverse to existing lines of traffic, where scarcely the humblest vehicle that plies upon our common roads finds support. Moreover, one of these lines, (that to connect Mullingar or Longford with Armagh,) would run almost in the very track of a line of canal, more than forty miles in length, which is at this moment in process of construction by the Government, to unite the Shannon at Leitrim with Lough Erne at Belurbet, and by this means to supply the only link wanting to connect the navigations of the north with those of the south, and to bring into direct communication Belfast and Limerick, together with all the intermediate towns in both provinces. A considerable portion of this line is now traversed daily by swift steamers, and it is obvious that any line of railway in that direction would not only affect important private interests, such as the Ulster Canal, &c., but would render useless a large public outlay, at this moment appropriated to the formation of this new “Junction Canal.” What is, however, a more general and cogent objection is, that the traffic in this case proposed to be forwarded is already provided for.

But in order more fully to appreciate the folly of this scheme, it is only necessary to recal the struggles and expenditure of capital that have been made, during the last few years, to connect the chief towns of the country, and that even to this day, the line between Dublin and Belfast, the two most important towns in Ireland, remains incomplete, although years have elapsed since the parliamentary powers for its construction were obtained. The proprietors of this line will, doubtless, after so long a struggle, look forward, on its completion, to the traffic that will arise in the event of the establishment of a packet

station on our shores, and will watch, with jealous anxiety, any rival to their legitimate interests in this traffic; whilst the public will naturally inquire, why so large an expenditure as that now in progress in forming the Junction Canal, should be paralysed by the suggestion of a system of unproductive railways. Besides, the completion of these lines at so vast an expenditure, would not accelerate the intercourse between Belfast and Galway more than an hour and a-half, the difference of distance between the proposed direct route and that *via* Dublin, being, according to this writer's own showing, only forty-seven miles; and as, on the same authority, the difference in time between Belfast and Galway and Belfast and Foynes, amounts to only a few minutes, it is clear that, considering the question in reference to the communication with the north of Ireland and Scotland, these two ports stand at present on a par. But if the question is to be considered merely in its action on particular localities, there can be no difficulty in showing, that if Belfast could be brought, with this large expenditure, nearer to Galway by one hour and a-half, (between which towns there is not at present any trade whatever,) yet, by adopting the Shannon, all the advantages proffered to Scotland, Belfast, and the metropolis of Ireland, may be preserved and augmented, with the saving of some millions, and at the same time, London, Gloucester, Bristol, and the whole of the southern district of England, can be brought much nearer to the Atlantic by Limerick than by the Galway route; thus giving to the seat of empire, and to the whole of northern Europe, an advantage in postal communication greatly exceeding any proposed by the rival scheme. Before the close of the ensuing summer, a continuous railway communication is expected to be completed from London to Milford, and a corresponding communication will even sooner be completed from Limerick to Waterford on the other side. It is obvious, then, that if we look to what has been and what may hereafter be accomplished, the Shannon presents in this respect, as in every other, much greater advantages than any other port, facilities which will besides be increased within a short period, and comparatively at a small expense.

But we can afford to treat the subject on the simpler basis of existing arrangements, without condescending to

avail ourselves of the advantage resulting from an exposure of the speculations connected with the railways proposed to radiate from Galway. We believe that the important object we have in view, will be best arrived at by the least disturbance of existing arrangements. We also plead guilty to the national weakness of attaching importance to the claims of Dublin, and of bestowing on the metropolis of Ireland, some greater consideration in this question than Mr. Whiteside condescends to grant. The rejected report disregards this question altogether. It does more; it sets aside the claims of Dublin as unimportant. Standing as high as it does among the great commercial ports of the empire, in shipping, exports, imports, and revenue receipts,* Dublin possesses facilities, as well as indispensable accommodation, for carrying out, as from a central point, an extensive service of this description, which it would be difficult to find elsewhere. Whether the River Shannon or Galway Bay (the two harbours selected by the Packet Station Commissioners) is ultimately chosen, Dublin must ever be regarded as the great central point for all the chief towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and, as has been shown, the two ports of Foynes and Galway may be regarded as equi-distant from this centre, they are therefore equally eligible, in this particular, in reference to all other parts of the empire.

The evidence of Mr. Mulvany, one of the witnesses examined before the Packet Station Commissioners, is strongly relied on by the learned advocate, but the bias of this witness's views lessens the weight of his opinion. This witness's plan for connecting the Midland Railway with the Kingstown line, in order to obviate the delay and inconvenience of changing to and from the different trains, is put forward as of much importance in

* REVENUE RECEIPTS.

	£.
Dublin.....	933,575
Belfast.....	346,426
Cork.....	256,590
Limerick.....	186,182
Waterford.....	119,393
Galway.....	31,676

Yet Mr. Whiteside would sacrifice Dublin to Galway!!

the question. The merits of this plan will be best judged by the citizens of Dublin. The Midland line is proposed to be connected with the Drogheda line by a branch formed at the north side of the city, and from the station of the latter line, the connexion with the Kingstown Railway is to be accomplished by a "high level bridge." This bridge is proposed to cross the Liffey *below* the Custom House, from thence passing near St. Mark's Church, to join the Westland-row station. Now, it may be necessary to describe what a "high level bridge" is: it signifies a bridge built of a double tier of arches, one tier standing over and upon the other—that above to carry the railway, and that below for the common road traffic. Let us imagine the erection of this enormous bridge and its embankments, some fifty or sixty feet above the river and quays and their adjoining streets, crossing below the Custom-house, and cutting off all the shipping from that point, and the whole of the docks, besides totally disfiguring one of those beautiful buildings which are the ornament and pride of the city, and interfering with the valuable private property through which it must traverse, as well as that extending along both sides of the river to Carlisle bridge, where the shipping reaches at present. Compare this with the easy connexion that can be formed between the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Kingstown line, by a branch along or near the line of the Grand Canal, and which would afford means of improving a neglected district of the city, instead of disfiguring one already highly improved, and materially damaging the port.

In like manner the Great Southern and Western Railway can be connected with the Midland line by a small bridge across the Liffey *above* the city, and thence to the Drogheda Railway, which connects with the northern lines. These connexions are simple, and bear a striking contrast with the complicated and expensive arrangements necessary to connect the Midland Railway with the Kingstown line, and would complete in all respects the connexion of all the railways radiating from the city, whilst the other plan would form only a partial connexion of the various lines, leaving some of them still detached from all the others, as at present. We submit this question to the citizens of Dublin, who can best decide whether it is of advantage to the city that the

upper part of the port and all the docks should be deprived of all access in future to the shipping, and the whole port disfigured in the way proposed by this "high level bridge." Indeed, it is quite clear that it would be difficult to conceive any arrangement more injurious in its consequences to the city of Dublin.

We now proceed to notice the extracts made by Mr. Whiteside from the naval evidence given before the Transatlantic Packet-Station Commission.

The following extract from the Commissioners' Report is first given by the learned author :—

"We are of opinion that the harbour of Galway and that of Foynes, are those best adapted for a North American Packet Station: of the two which we have selected Galway, *were the requisite works constructed*, would be most free from objections of a nautical character."

What these "requisite works" are will be noticed hereafter. But our impartial author feels no compunction in omitting the continuation of this extract, for it obviously does not suit his advocacy. We must supply this omission. The Commissioners in continuation state—

"It should be observed, however, that Limerick, from which the Railway could at small expense be continued to Foynes,* occupies at present a more central position than Galway, as regards Railway communication, Limerick being connected by Railway with Cork, Waterford, and most of the principal towns in the south of Ireland, while Galway cannot be reached by Railway either from the south or north of Ireland, except by way of Dublin."

This clearly determines the superior central position of the Shannon for this object, over all other ports, even under existing arrangements, without reference to the other routes already referred to. Here, therefore, are two conclusive deficiencies admitted by the Royal Commission to exist in Galway—the first, the want of a sufficiently protected harbour; the second, its deficiency of railroad communication. This statement should never be lost sight of.

But in considering a question of this nature, the object

* A Company is now formed to carry this short line into effect, the plans of which are lodged for the sanction of Parliament this session.

of paramount importance is the nautical capability of the harbour, for it is obvious that without a suitable haven for the large and valuable steamers required for this service, enabling them to ride in safety at all seasons, and providing accommodation for their maintenance and repair, the amount of railway accommodation, even if it existed at Galway, would only be of secondary importance.—The naval evidence appended to the Commissioners' Report thus becomes vitally important, and we propose to follow our author very fully into this branch of his inquiry.

Captain Bedford's evidence affords the reporter an opportunity of making copious extracts, but to the first question put to this gallant witness his answer is, that Galway is the only port upon which he can give any opinion. He was once in Cork, never at Long Island, never at Crookhaven, once at Berehaven, "but many years ago," never at Valentia, once at Tarbert, never at Foynes, never at Dunmanus Bay, but at Galway "frequently, and at all times between April and November for the last six years." Subsequently he states, in page 56, "I have not navigated this coast during the winter season." Hence it appears that the first witness presented is totally unacquainted with the different ports, on the comparative merits of which it is the learned advocate's object to decide; and even as regards Galway, the only port with which he is really familiar, the witness knows nothing whatever of it as a place of shelter or safety during the winter half of the year. The reader will judge, therefore, to what extent he may rely on the learned advocate in selecting evidence fairly; more particularly as in the same document in which Captain Bedford's evidence appears, there is contained the evidence of about forty naval and Coast Guard officers, as well as other sea-faring men, a large proportion of whom are well acquainted with most of the harbours in question, and but few of them that do not thoroughly know both the Shannon and Galway, the two ports singled out by the Commissioners for this object. At page 91, this leading witness, so peculiarly well informed on this subject, exclaims, "Comparing the several ports under consideration, where is the one whose natural facilities equal Galway, or in which there is a less demand

“for artificial works to render it both a magnificent harbour
 “and an eligible port for Transatlantic communication!”
 This is doubtless very high sounding, but the reader has
 already seen that the witness is, according to his own
 written statement, wholly unacquainted with any of the
 harbours with which he draws this comparison; and yet
 such is the testimony which our author submits to the “ap-
 proval or disapproval of his fellow citizens.” His opinion
 is plainly not worth a jot for deciding the relative capa-
 bilities of the different ports. We shall have hereafter an
 opportunity of knowing the extent of the “artificial works”
 which this witness himself declares necessary at Galway,
 and which he treats so lightly, and in the mean time, as
 he professes to be well acquainted with Galway locality, we
 shall see what he states of the fitness of the dock and port
 for a Transatlantic Packet Station. At page 9, in answer
 to the queries of the Commissioners, he admits that “Gal-
 way dock is *not capable of receiving vessels of the class of*
the Transatlantic packets, drawing $19\frac{1}{2}$ feet water. It
 “has a clear entrance of 54 feet,” [70 feet is the minimum
 breadth required for the British steamers plying to America,
 and 80 feet for the American steamers,] “an area of rather
 “more than five acres, and a depth of from 14 to 17 feet
 “at high water spring tides.” So much for the Galway
 dock, which, it is clear, is, even in the highest tides, quite de-
 ficient in depth for any purpose of this kind, and also alto-
 gether too narrow for this object. Furthermore, a glance
 at the Admiralty Chart, produced by this same witness,
 will show, that for a distance of nearly half a mile from the
 port and dock, out towards the roadstead, the depths at
 high water, are no better than the 14 to 17 feet above
 given; so that the approaches to the port are altogether
 inaccessible even at high water, except for vessels of
 moderate draft, and are nearly dry out at low water.—
 There is accordingly absolutely no existing port or dock at
 Galway for this purpose. In pages 58 and 59 our learned
 advocate professes to give what he denominates “defects” in
 the Bay of Galway, which he takes from Captain Bedford’s
 evidence, enumerating the dangers to be apprehended in
 approaching the anchorage. The “Black Rock” on the
 north, and the “Marguerita Rock” on the south, are
 mentioned; on which latter he states “there is only 11 feet

“in depth at low water, with a long shoal extending half “a mile to the westward.” The chart of the bay will best shew the nature of these “defects,” with numerous others, of which there is no mention. But all allusion to the same witness’s evidence, as given in page 9 of the Appendix, is avoided, where we find that “during heavy westerly winds “the sea which sets in might occasionally be such, as to “prevent communication with the shore by means of an “auxiliary steamer, of the size necessary for entering the “the river where a landing could be effected.” We therefore can conceive the predicament in which the mails and passengers would find themselves under such untoward circumstances, after a long voyage. But to obviate these difficulties, a sea pier or break-water is proposed to be run out from Mutton Island into the deep water, so as to cover the roadstead; but the witness adds, that “*much more than “this would, however, be necessary to convert the roadstead “into a suitable harbour for commodious mercantile trans- “actions.*” We are not told what the nature and extent of these additional works are to be, but after this great sea pier is erected, which is to throw off the “heavy sea “that sets in during westerly gales,” still, “much more” than this would be required to convert the roadstead into a suitable “harbour;” so that it clearly appears, that after all this high sounding approval of this harbour, in the judgment of the leading witness Galway possesses only a wide exposed roadstead, without shelter, and totally without harbour, dock, or port;—yet we are gravely and triumphantly asked by this very witness, “where is there “a harbour in which there is less demand for artificial “works to render it both a magnificent harbour, and an “eligible port for Transatlantic communication?” It would scarcely seem necessary to proceed any further than this evidence to determine the capabilities of Galway Bay; but we shall proceed with the nautical evidence brought before us by the learned author of the rejected report. The next witness is Captain Wingrove, R.N., from whose evidence a short extract is given, from page 60, in reference to objections made against Cork; but our author, in his eagerness to find fault with other harbours, omits all mention of what this witness states of Galway and other ports. For instance, as to Valentia, he states that it is “the most com-

“pletely land locked harbour on the coast; water smooth
 “and deep, with firm holding ground.”—“Tarbert in-
 “different, with twenty-five miles of difficult navigation.”
 “*Galway at the bottom of a deep bay, much exposed to*
 “*westerly winds.*” In vain do we seek throughout this
 witness’s evidence, for the preference which it is intended
 to be conveyed that he gives to Galway; on the contrary,
 his remarks are more condemnatory of that port than of
 any others, being exposed to all the prevailing winds, and
 at the bottom of a deep bay, with a bad lee-shore; but we
 shall see by and by what the other naval witnesses say on
 the same subject.

Lieutenant Turnour, R.N. is next quoted, and first, an
 important part of his evidence is omitted, namely, his
 reply to query 4, page 22, in which he states, that the
 first land-fall to be made on the coast of Ireland when
 coming from the west, bound either to the Shannon or
 Galway, is the Skelligs light and then Loop Head. Let
 the chart of the coast be examined, when it will be seen
 that if bound for Galway, the vessel must, after sighting
 the Skelligs, continue a coasting voyage for miles, and
 absolutely pass the mouth of the Shannon, which will
 be proved hereafter, on the authority of naval evidence,
 to be the best and most complete harbour on the coast.
 Yet this harbour is to be passed, and an additional and
 dangerous navigation risked, in order to reach a harbour
 which this same witness altogether condemns. The wit-
 ness is perfectly correct in naming the Skelligs as the
 first object the mariner seeks for, in coming from the west,
 for this obvious reason, that it is the first “land-fall” on
 our whole coast, and is besides the most western point of
 the European shores. This remarkable land-fall is there-
 fore very conspicuously lighted, and no seaman will ap-
 proach any part of the west coast at night or in hazy foul
 weather, without first sighting this point. Having reached
 the Skelligs, his course leads him direct to the Loop Head
 light, standing on the conspicuous headland of that name,
 which marks the mouth of the Shannon. That noble
 river, which Spenser describes justly as “spreading like a
 “sea,” at once presents him with a safe and commodious
 haven, without encountering further danger or delay.
 Though this is an advantage apparently beyond the com-

prehension of a landsman like our worthy author, it will have its due weight with the seafaring reader, especially if at all acquainted with the west coast of Ireland.

To the next question (No. 5) the same witness continues—

“A vessel of $19\frac{1}{2}$ feet draught would have to anchor in Galway Roads, although there is a floating dock and another in course of construction, *yet not even at high water spring tides could a vessel of such a draught approach within a quarter of a mile of the docks. Neither could mails, passengers, or goods be at all times landed or embarked from the Roads. I have been prevented by the wind and sea for upwards of twenty-four hours from communicating with the shore, and could only then during a lull at low water, when shelter was afforded my boats by the uncovering of the rocks off Mutton Island; even at low water springs, neither goods nor passengers could at present be landed, either with rapidity or convenience, though the weather be fine.*”

In giving the evidence of this witness, is it not a little singular that the learned reporter did not direct the attention of his readers to this remarkable answer? But let us turn our attention to the same witness's evidence in page 96, where we are told that Lieut. Turnour lay in Galway Bay, in command of her Majesty's steamer the “Shearwater,” for several weeks, on three different occasions; that, in his own words, “during the first period he had to let go a second anchor, and ride with two anchors a-head upon nineteen different days, *and twice had to steam up in readiness to assist the anchors.*” “The second period” (during one month) “had two anchors a-head twice.” “The third time stationed, had seven times to let go a second anchor.” He answers to query 6, “What wind throws in the heaviest sea?” “The wind from south by west to west by south.” To query 7, “How many days have you been unable to land with safety and dry?” “*So many that I cannot state how often, but I have been three weeks at a time without landing, on account of the uncertainty of getting on board quite dry.*” Let the reader only imagine himself lying on board a steamer within shot of the shore, and not to be able to effect a landing during three weeks, and with the further fact that even though the weather be fine, a landing could scarcely be made. Why the gallant commander might

have crossed the Atlantic to America to provision and coal his ship, and have returned to Ireland in that period ! May not the reader fairly ask why this striking evidence was not even alluded to ; but doubtless these untoward circumstances were set down to the “ defects ” in the harbour, and were passed over as not worth noticing. We, however, could continue to make extracts having a similar bearing from this witness’s evidence, showing that no landing whatever can be made in the town, in any state of the wind at low water, nor coals taken aboard, except during the most favourable weather and at particular points of the wind ; but enough has been given to show the manner in which the evidence has been dealt with in this statement, which appeals for the “ approval or dis-approval of the public.”

The evidence of Commander Kelly, R.N. is next noticed ; but in stating this witness’s opinions, no notice is taken of his admission that he knows nothing whatever of the Shannon, and that in comparing Cork and Galway, his evidence is altogether in favour of Cork. Throughout all his answers to the various queries, he gives the preference to Cork over any other Irish port that he is acquainted with, and he states he knows Galway, but not the Shannon.

Mr. Patrick O’Halloran, Commander Burke, R.N., and Lieutenant O’Malley are next noticed. O’Halloran is the Galway pilot for the last twenty-six years, and we can have no difficulty in anticipating the preference he would give for the locality with which he has been so long connected. Commander Burke says, that all the harbours on the coast are excellent, not particularizing Galway more than any others ; he has steered out of all of them at night, but was never in them in a steamer. Lieutenant O’Malley is a native of Galway, knows nothing of Foynes, was never in the Shannon but twice, when he merely entered its mouth, and was five hundred times in Galway, and, doubtless retaining the early and endearing associations of his youthful days, which are connected in his mind with that locality, he gives it the preference over all others.

The next evidence is that of Lieutenant Broad, R.N., and the only extract we get is simply thus : “ I am of opinion that steam vessels once inside the Arran Islands

“could approach Galway Roads at all times without danger.” Now this witness states that he was nearly three years cruising on the coast of Ireland, “from November, 1846, to June, 1849,” and the obvious intention in giving the above brief extract from his evidence, was to convey the impression that Galway was the best port in his opinion; but we shall afford the reader an opportunity of seeing what this witness’s opinions are, by giving nearly the whole of his evidence.

In answer to query 3 he states, that he was three times at Cork—never in Long Island—never in Crookhaven—once in Berehaven—never in Valentia—stationed twelve months in Tarbert—three or four times in Galway, and never in Dunmanus Bay.

In reply to query 4, he says—

“I do not consider myself sufficiently acquainted so as to form an opinion of the capabilities of these ports. The river Shannon I consider to be of very easy access, being free from danger at its entrance, and deep water close to the shore, which can enable masters of vessels navigating this part of the coast to run boldly for its entrance, *more especially steam-vessels*, as in thick weather they can stand in until they make Loop-head, and once made, enables them to continue their course up the Shannon to a safe anchorage in any weather, where there is plenty of water for the largest ships to ride,—*also I consider the river Shannon to be one of the first ports in Ireland for Transatlantic steam communication*, the upper part of the river affording facility for the building of docks, &c. to any extent.”

“Galway harbour or Roads I have had but little experience in, the weather being fine upon the several times I have anchored there, and those for very short periods; I am of opinion that steam vessels once inside the Arran Islands could approach Galway Roads at all times without danger. The roadstead of Galway is open to south-west winds, which causes rather rough riding.”

To query 5, he says—

“I have frequently entered and sailed from the Shannon *by night*, both in fine weather and thick dirty weather, snow, squalls, and fogs, but never in a north-west gale, Galway I have entered and sailed from but once, the weather being fine in both instances.”

To query 6, he says—

“I do not consider there is any risk in a vessel propelled by steam upon the west coast of Ireland, of a certain tonnage, as I

“presume no vessel would be employed that had not sufficient steam power to make head-way, however bad it might blow, should her position be found contrary to what it was desired.”

To query 7, he says—

“In making a voyage from America, in a steam-vessel drawing 19½ feet of water, the river Shannon is the port I would prefer to run for in the winter season.”

To query 8, he says—

“In consequence of the approach to the river Shannon being bold, I would stand towards the shore (unless in a dense fog) sufficiently close to make out the Loop Head light. In the day time, in moderately clear weather, the Brandon mountains are an excellent land-mark, being discernible from a great distance. Also the Blasket Islands, they being pretty bold upon the sea side, and the whole of the shore, from the Blaskets to Kerry Head may be approached without danger, as the depth of water will guide you clear of the rocks that lay inside of the Hog Islands, and having made out the entrance of the Shannon you can proceed for Tarbert without delay.”

To queries 9 and 10, he says—

“The land I would make in the day would be Loop Head or the Brandon mountains, and at night Loop Head at the Shannon mouth.”

Query 11 asks—

“Would you fearlessly in a dark or hazy night, in the depth of winter, in a steam-ship drawing 19½ feet water, in all weathers run for Galway, the Shannon, Valencia, Bantry Bay, or Long Island?”

And his reply is—

“The Shannon, all things considered, I am of opinion is the safest port, having the boldest shore to contend with upon making the land, and no head-lands to round before making the lights, besides having a large clear entrance, which is most desirable for vessels of large draught of water, and of great length.”

Query 12 asks, “Would you run for Cork?”—his reply is—

“Under the circumstances I have before stated, I would prefer running for the Shannon in preference to Cork.”

Query 13—

“If a steam-vessel’s machinery was out of order, damaged or defective, would it be prudent, in bad weather, to run in the night for either of the ports?”

His reply is—

“Under the circumstances alluded to I should not consider it prudent to run in the night time in bad weather, unless the land had been sighted previously.”

Query 14—

“Under such circumstances in making a run from America, for what port in Ireland would you steer?”

His reply is—

“Under such circumstances I should consider the Shannon the best port to steer for, but it would greatly depend upon the state of the weather, and the direction of the wind; as for instance, should it be blowing a gale from the north-west, attended with dirty thick weather, so that the land or lights could not be seen until the vessel was well in with the shore, I should under these circumstances steer for Cape Clear, or one of the south-western ports, as the water would be smooth under the land, but should the wind be to the south-west the Shannon would be the port.”

The reader may now judge how far he can rely on the mode in which the learned reporter selects his evidence; and he may from thence draw his own inference with respect to the impartiality of this justly-rejected report. We shall proceed to consider the extracts from Mr. Mulvany’s evidence, of which it is announced by the learned author, though the evidence of nautical and naval witnesses must naturally attract attention and deserve respect, he has been greatly influenced in his judgment by the elaborate document prepared and transmitted to the Commissioners by Mr. Mulvany.” We however must, at the outset, disclaim any such notion as this; for, no matter how ingeniously Mr. Mulvany may have put forward his views—and we quite admit that he has not been sparing of his opinions—still we contend that the case of these ports is emphatically a question that must be decided by nautical opinion, aided by the advice and guidance of experienced harbour engineers and intelligent shipowners, and not by wild and

Utopian railway schemes, such as this witness seems so much disposed to regard, and which can neither supply a safe and commodious haven, such as the Transatlantic service requires, nor obviate the outlying dangers of any port.

We have already adverted to the caution with which this witness's evidence must be received. It is observable that much of his opinions are based upon the Utopian system of railways already described,—railways which would require an amount of expenditure rendering their accomplishment utterly hopeless, and traversing districts wholly disconnected from Galway, and not holding out the most distant hope of even paying their working expenses, much less of providing a suitable dividend. And for this outlay of millions, all that their most sanguine advocate anticipates is an acceleration of about one hour and a half between Belfast and Galway, beyond the existing route from Belfast to Dublin, and thence to Galway or thence to Foynes. The obvious meaning, therefore, of these railways is to divert attention from the true subject of consideration—namely, the selection of the best port for Transatlantic communication. It is precisely in these particulars that this witness's evidence is altogether deficient, conveying no information on the nautical or commercial bearings of the question, and betraying throughout the involuntary leaning by which his opinions are regulated.

In speaking of the equidistance of Galway from the chief towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland, he does not call attention to the fact, that Limerick and Galway are nearly equidistant from Dublin; and as Dublin must be the converging point for all these towns, Limerick is quite as much central as Galway is in reference to Great Britain, and is infinitely more central in reference to Ireland. The Transatlantic Commissioners have clearly described the superior position of Limerick in this particular, as already quoted, having its railway communications radiating in different directions to the north, south, and east—two of them in full operation, and the third advancing rapidly towards its completion.

In speaking of the capabilities of Galway Bay, we are told by Mr. Mulvany that it has from twenty to thirty miles of comparatively sheltered navigation, and that it has

“ numerous adjacent inlets and harbours within itself, or “ near the northern entrance, available in case of need.” We have already, however, a tolerably correct notion of what is to be understood by a “ comparatively sheltered “ navigation,” from the evidence of the naval witnesses whom the learned reporter himself relies on, particularly Lieutenant Turnour, who had so often, in the course of a few weeks, to ride with two anchors, and occasionally to get up steam, for the purpose of relieving the pressure on the anchors whilst riding in Galway Bay ;—and we would here ask this witness in all truth to name the adjacent inlets or harbours near the northern entrance into which a Transatlantic steamer is to escape in case of need ; or would he say that a vessel of this or any other class can approach that shore or enter that channel, during even a moderate breeze, with any hope of escaping inevitable wreck ?—and still more, is there any one of these inlets more than capable of receiving a fishing smack, and that only at high water ? These are questions which an individual of this witness’s position should answer, without dealing in generalities, which are, when tested by direct evidence, so devoid of foundation. “ *Dolus in generalibus versatur,*” is a maxim which was seldom better illustrated.

In order to form a conclusive opinion of the correctness of this evidence, it is only necessary to refer to the pages of the Tidal Harbour Commissioners’ Report of 1845, where the numerous wrecks on this identical part of Galway Bay are enumerated, and which clearly indicate the nature of the entrance at this point. It appears that all the vessels and cargoes mentioned were lost, except three ; and out of these wrecks half the crews were lost.

In short, the coast at this point is beset with sunken reefs and rocks for several miles, and lying on a lee shore, is justly accounted one of the most dangerous parts of the coast of Ireland. The list of wrecks referred to clearly indicates this fact ; and in confirmation, we may add the evidence of Lieutenant Carter, R.N., who, in speaking of Galway Bay, says :—

“ Inside of Arran Islands I have not had much experience, my “ visits therein being confined to a limited number of times during “ the summer months ; but outside of those islands I have had “ more experience, and I know no part of the coast of Ireland more

“difficult to approach or to make than from thence to Slynehead,” [the northern headland of Galway Bay.] “The rocks and breakers extend far off the land, whilst the shore of Malbay is both deep and dangerous.”

In answer to query 14, he says—

“Galway or Valentia, with a crippled ship, would be quite out of the question.”

On the same subject Mr. J. Aylen, Master-Attendant, Sheerness dockyard, who visited all the ports, in speaking of Galway, says, in page 62 :—

“The continued heavy sea setting into this bay, with the wind blowing dead on the shore for eight or nine months in the year, often with heavy gales and thick foggy weather, no master in command would run into this bay without great risk of losing his vessel.”

At page 41, he states of Galway, that

“There is a continued swell setting in this dangerous bay of Galway; and in a gale from the south to the south-south-west, there is not a safe anchorage in the bay. It is, therefore, quite unfit for a station of the kind I am speaking of, and is far inferior to either Berehaven or Valentia.”

Hereafter the reader will find that this witness speaks most favourably of the Shannon; and from the foregoing account of wrecks at the entrance of Galway Bay, and the evidence of the naval authorities quoted, it will be seen how unwise it would be to accept Mr. Mulvany as our nautical guide. Galway Bay itself could hardly be more unsafe; yet we are ingenuously told by the learned author of the statement before us, that he has been greatly influenced in his judgment by Mr. Mulvany’s report; and it is on this account, we presume, that he justifies his disregard of the opinions of nautical men on this nautical question.

In noticing the commercial capabilities of Galway, this witness reminds the reader, that at some remote period that town had a trade with Spain and Portugal. But in tracing the historical events of by-gone times, he altogether forgot to favor us with any means to test the *present state* of commerce in Galway, which, with all due respect for his research, we would far prefer in this inquiry, to any

suggestion or hypothesis of a “considerable trade in former “times.” When Spain and Portugal led the commerce of Europe, they carried their enterprise to the remotest shores and most obscure ports of the then known world, and no doubt Galway shared in this commerce to the extent of its local wants in common with other ports. Nor was the intercourse with Spain in the days of the Tudors more profitable than it was conducive to the peace and prosperity of Ireland.

We cannot see any connexion between the trade with Spain some centuries ago, and a Transatlantic Packet Station in our day (1852); but we fortunately have in the pages of the Commissioners’ Report, page 298, a table of statistical facts, taken from official documents, which gives, on the best authority, the comparative state of the commerce of Limerick and Galway in the present day, from which we quote the following extracts:—

Number and Tonnage of Vessels registered in the Ports, 1849:—

	No.	Tonnage.		No.	Tonnage.
Limerick . .	105	13,834		Galway . . .	22 4,265.

Account of Customs in 1850:—

Limerick	£186,044		Galway	£31,435
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Number and Tonnage of Vessels entered and cleared out in 1849:—

LIMERICK.			GALWAY.		
	No.	Tonnage.		No.	Tonnage.
Coastways . .	832	88,334	Coastways . .	122	12,433
Colonies . . .	109	29,949	Colonies . . .	21	5,546
Foreign . . .	498	97,283	Foreign . . .	147	28,579
Total .	1,439	215,566	Total . .	290	46,548

Duty paid for Tobacco entered for Consumption in 1849:—

Limerick	£107,038		Galway	£11,455
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Coals Imported:—

	Tons.		Tons.	
Limerick	27,816		Galway	6,676

Emigration direct from the Ports, 1849:—

Limerick	11,554		Galway	3,933
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Postage, 1848, 1849, 1850:—

Limerick	£12,938		Galway	£3,274
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Steamers plying to the Port, or on the Navigation:—

LIMERICK.		GALWAY.
Sea-going Steamers	5	<i>Nil.</i>
Tidal River Steamers	3	
Inland Navigation	12	
Total	20	

Here, then, we show the amount of customs received in Limerick is sixfold that in Galway; the number of ships entered and cleared out, fivefold; the duty paid on tobacco, tenfold; emigration, threefold; and the number of steamers plying, twentyfold—plainly indicating the superior commercial capabilities of the Shannon: and we may here fairly ask, if Galway was a place of such importance in “former times,” why is it that it has not continued to maintain its position, when the neighbouring port of Limerick has continued to increase as it has done year after year?—Probably the “defects” in Galway Bay, glanced at by our worthy author, will best answer this question, and that the seamen of our days, instead of encountering “the rocks and breakers which extend far off the land,” so graphically described by the nautical witness already quoted, prefer a harbour free from obstruction and danger, and a river port possessing all the elements for carrying on a great commerce.

Without following the author further through his statement, we believe we have given the reader sufficient proof of the unhappy partiality displayed by him for the functions of the advocate, in which he has won so deserved a reputation, in preference to the less brilliant functions of a judge, from which he shrunk. It being clear that Galway is, at present, wanting in the most necessary qualifications for port or harbour, we shall now proceed to consider the means proposed to supply these important deficiencies.

In the first place it is proposed, that in order to afford shelter to the roadstead, (which all the witnesses describe as exposed to a heavy swell, when the wind ranges from south round to west, the prevailing winds on the Irish coast,) it is indispensable that the Mutton Island should be connected with the land by a mole, and that a sea-pier or

breakwater should be carried out for about half a mile, until it reaches the deep water, running in a suitable direction to afford shelter where required.

As regards this plan, it must be kept in mind that vessels such as the Transatlantic steamers, drawing from $19\frac{1}{2}$ to 21 feet, will require, when riding at anchor in an exposed position of this kind, at least 30 feet of water. Without that depth it is obvious there would be no safety during stormy weather; and an inspection of the Admiralty Chart will at once show that the extent of harbour attainable by the construction of the proposed breakwater, will be greatly deficient for any useful purpose as a harbour. But the opinion of the Commissioners themselves seems to set at rest any doubt as to the eligibility of this site for a harbour, or as to the practicability of forming it at all.

At page 11 of their Report, the Bay of Galway is described as—

“Free from tidal influences, and its entrance partially covered by the Arran Islands. But the usual roadstead is nearly twenty-five miles from those islands, and does not afford such shelter from the heavy W. S. W. gales, and the Atlantic sea, for vessels of the size of the Transatlantic mail packets, which draw from nineteen to twenty feet of water, as would enable them to coal, or to land and embark their mails, passengers, and goods, at all times and in any state of the weather.” “From the evidence in the Appendix, it will be seen, that such is the opinion of most of the officers whom we have consulted, and whose knowledge of Galway Bay qualified them to give information on the subject. Lieutenant Turnour, who commanded the ‘Shearwater,’ a steamer drawing only twelve feet of water, at three several periods during which that vessel was at anchor in Galway Roads, states, that on each occasion he was obliged to let go a second anchor, and that the communication with the shore was precarious, owing to the want of sufficient shelter from the wind and sea; and these inconveniences would obviously be more severely felt by vessels of the size and draught of water of the Transatlantic packets. These objections, however, might be met by the construction of a breakwater, connecting Mutton Island with the main-land, and also of one extending from the south-east point of the island, so as to protect the roadstead, and having a landing wharf, along side of which the packets might lie. But consideration must also be given to the possibility that these works might, after a time, owing to the large quantity of

“water which empties itself into that part of the bay, lead to the
“creation of shoals, and to the silting up of the harbour.”

This gives in very clear and unmistakeable terms, the opinion formed of Galway Bay by the Commissioners, after having considered the large mass of naval evidence they had collected; and in order to arrive at a correct notion of the probability of the silting up here prognosticated, which would amount to its destruction for all purposes of a harbour, it is necessary to describe, that it is into the roadstead that the river which runs from Loughs Corrib and Mask discharges itself, bringing with it all the accumulated supplies of the numerous mountain-rivers flowing from the Connemara mountains, which skirt those loughs. Now, almost every one is aware, that in selecting a site for a harbour, one of the first conditions to be observed is, that no river or stream of any kind shall flow into the space intended to be enclosed as the harbour. At Kingstown, Holyhead, Dover, Portland, &c., at all of which places harbours are now being constructed, not the smallest rill is allowed to enter the harbour, lest that, in course of time, any sedimentary deposit should take place within. The harbour at Dover is a striking illustration of the caution necessary to be observed in this particular, where a difficulty arose respecting the stream that runs into the sea at that place. No less than three successive commissions were organised to examine into this matter, which continued their inquiry over a period of several years, and all the scientific knowledge of England was brought to their aid. Chemists, geologists, philosophers, engineers, naturalists, and seamen, were examined on the subject, and the waters of the locality, both fresh and salt, were analysed and weighed, in order to determine whether it would be safe to have this stream to run into the harbour, or even to discharge immediately outside along the adjoining shore. If such, then, be the necessity of caution in the case of a moderate-sized stream, fed from a comparatively flat district, we may easily foretel what would occur in the case of a large river, bearing the turbid waters of numerous mountain torrents, and hemmed in at the discharging point by the breakwater proposed to be constructed in this case.

But it may be stated, though it has not hitherto been

suggested, that this difficulty might be obviated by forming the harbour farther down the bay. This, however, would be only obviating one difficulty, to encounter others of an equally condemnatory character. The exposure would be infinitely worse, and there would be no possibility of fixing the entrance in a position that would make the harbour accessible when most required. In short, the harbour would be altogether on the wrong side of the bay, where no harbour can ever be constructed to be of any use. At Kingstown, where numerous wrecks have occurred within the harbour, a second inner harbour is now in construction, and on its completion a third is to be commenced. This is on a coast sheltered from the prevailing winds; and what hope then can be entertained that a shelter harbour should ever be constructed in so exposed a locality as Galway is described to be by all these naval authorities? In what has been stated, no mention has been made of the cost or the time of completing these works. Kingstown harbour, which is not yet complete, has cost nearly one million sterling. Holyhead is expected very considerably to exceed that sum. Dover harbour will probably cost two millions; and recollecting that these harbours are on coasts comparatively sheltered, we can readily conceive that the heavy nature of the works that would be required on a shore so exposed as Galway, would involve an outlay of enormous sums, and that many years must elapse before the necessary accommodation would be provided for the packet service. Suitable docks are also an indispensable requisite, which Galway is unprovided with; and taking all these deficiencies into consideration, and the naval opinions quoted, it becomes obvious that probably no locality along the Irish coast presents less nautical facilities for the object in view than Galway. Such must have been the opinion in all previous inquiries on this subject, when Galway was not considered to present any qualification for an object of this nature, and such must be the inevitable conclusion from all the information obtained in the late searching inquiry.

Before closing our remarks on the evidence of Mr. Mulvany, we are desirous to notice his opinions respecting the Shannon. In his evidence he dwells much on the superior capabilities of this great river—its facilities for commerce—its position in the most fertile district in Ireland—its ex-

tensive navigation, connecting itself by means of steam communication throughout the whole interior of Ireland, are all alike extolled. No objection is urged to its seaward approach—its well marked entrance—its unobstructed channel, without shoal, bar, or rock—no want of lights; nor is it alleged by this or any other witness, that the river or port requires any outlay, or a day's delay, to make it available at any moment for a Transatlantic Packet Station.

The reader will, therefore, be much surprised to learn, that with all these admitted natural advantages, unequalled probably in any locality in the kingdom, the only ground upon which a fault is found is the alleged currents in the river, which it appears should condemn it for all purposes of a steam navigation. Now, we should be glad to know where we are to find a river without a current? This fine estuary of one of the greatest of European rivers, condemned because of the ordinary ebb and flow of the tides! Why, if this is to be the grounds of its rejection as a port for steamers, we would ask, what is to become of London, or of Liverpool, or of Glasgow, or of Bristol, or of Hull? This river, having a varying breadth of from three miles near Foynes, to eight miles at its mouth, a distance of forty miles, and its depth from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet, without a shoal or rock, or any obstruction throughout that length, objected to!—without Goodwin Sands, or any shoals such as beset the approach and course of the Thames—without the high-rising tides of the Severn—or the bar of the Mersey—or the shifting sands of the Humber—and yet objected to as a navigable river on such a pretext. In our simplicity, we always thought that the continued ebb and flow of the tide constituted one of the many advantages possessed by a river port in the estimation of every mariner, securing his arrival and departure when the wind failed, which would have left him becalmed in other ports. But, perhaps, in this age of discovery, a new light is to be thrown on this subject, although we cannot refrain from regarding this notion with considerable surprise, and we should consign the witness to no worse fate, than to encounter an honest Londoner after it had been proclaimed, that the ebb and flow of the tide in the Thames destroyed that river for a great channel of intercourse and commerce, and that it ought to be abandoned for Yarmouth, or some

such minor fishing port on the neighbouring coast. In like manner the Mersey, the Severn, the Clyde, are declared to be unfit for the purposes of trade, and to be abandoned by the countless steamers that traverse their tideways—likewise the Hudson, the Delaware, the St. Laurence, and the Mississippi—those great natural canals which in all countries, and through all time, have been established as the great channels of commerce.

Let the millions of inhabitants on the banks of these rivers be told that they and their forefathers have been always under a delusion, in selecting the banks of these rivers for the great seats of commerce, and, doubtless, it will recal to their mind, as it has done to ours, the reply of the worthy Londoners to the monarch, who, attempting to coerce them in some political topic which he was desirous to accomplish, threatened to remove the seat of government, to which they placidly replied, “Your Majesty can, doubtless, remove your court from London, but we defy you to remove the Thames.”

For the last twenty years several river steamers have plied upon the Shannon daily, in all weathers, with and against the tides, from the head of the estuary to near its mouth, and at present several sea-going steamers, plying to London, Glasgow, &c., are traversing the same course, and never has there been heard the smallest objection to a current in the course of this long period, nor the least interruption to the daily trips of these vessels up and down. But, in truth, the objection is too absurd for serious notice. In taking leave of this one-sided statement, which we cannot but regard in every respect, both in its compilation and the mode in which he has put it before the public, as unworthy of its learned author, we must not omit to notice the feverish excitement which has been systematically kept up in the public mind for some months on this important question. We believe that such a course of puffing is eminently calculated to damage the great object, which every well-wisher to the country is anxious to see accomplished on a proper basis; and whilst we are desirous to see the question brought to an early and successful issue, we are not such enthusiasts as to expect that the means and agencies employed will result in anything but discreditable failure, knowing that it is not by

noisy declamation, or garbled documents, that the success of a commercial undertaking, requiring the large capital, well-considered plans, and cool, calculating arrangements of the enterprising trader, will be ensured. Frequently it is asked, why it is we do not find the name of a single capitalist or trader of ordinary position, at the head of, or in any way connected with, the movement in favour of what is called the "Galway Packet Station,"—why it is, that amidst all the clamour, we have not heard of a single fraction being subscribed in that locality, to carry out an object which, after all, must ultimately be established, in a great degree, by local enterprise? But the fact is, by those who could and would embark in the enterprize, the question is looked upon as a mere farce, got up by parties who would be calculated to mar, rather than advance, the object. Let us pause here to recal to mind one or two of the principal incidents in the continually-shifting scenes that have been played off for the entertainment of a too credulous audience. First, we have the experimental trip of the "Viceroy," a vessel chosen, not with reference to her fitness to test an important object of this kind, or presenting in any way a ground of hope of a successful issue. No matter whether she was suited to the quiet waters of the Irish sea, for which she was constructed, or to the swelling waves of the Atlantic Ocean, for which she was so much unfitted, her name had a good sound; it would awaken associations in high places; and although the result in her wreck on the bleak shores of the Newfoundland coast, only confirmed the predictions of every intelligent seaman, we were coolly assured, with characteristic Galway sagacity, that the disaster and failure were more important and satisfactory, than the most successful trip could have been, for it gained notoriety for Galway—and thus the shadow was preferred to the substance. If shipwreck form the evidence and lay the ground of success, most undoubtedly the triumph of Galway over the Shannon is complete!

Then the scene changes to the board-room of the Galway Harbour Commissioners, where the pastor, on trading subjects bent, lays aside his clerical function, and, exchanging the pulpit for the commercial chamber, calls the attention of the astonished and open-mouthed traders



over whom he presides, to the adjoining bay, and appealing, in poetic strains, to the white-crested waves dancing in silvery splendour, as if in pleasing anticipation of the arrival of that foreign craft which was so soon to cleave their waters, he hurls defiance at the British lion, and hoists the eagle with its star and striped flag, as the standard on which he relies for victory.

Again another change, and we are now on the busy quays of New York, where the active citizens observe, with astonished gaze, the announcement of a "Galway Packet." The auspicious day of her sailing arrives; the green flag of Erin floats from her mast; the busy note of preparation is heard; the engine roars in triumphant power, when, lo!—the bubble bursts: for a plodding Dutchman appears, and hoisting the signal for California, the craft steers her course—not for Galway, but for San Francisco's golden shores.

The next scene brings before us an "express train," conveying the youthful and enterprising Wagstaff upon the Irish Midland Railway, with the untiring chairman urging forward the engine and its flying train. A special meeting of the Harbour Board awaits their arrival at Galway, where in due form the "merchant prince" announces his intentions. He and his father are described as owners of a fleet of ocean steamers, to be laid on forthwith for the Galway trade. He, it seems, has examined their bay; he, they are assured, wants no money; his ships are ready; and he only seeks the smiles of the fortunate denizens of the "City of the Tribes." The showers of compliments heaped upon him, by so distinguished and enterprising a commercial body, are more than compensation for his liberal projects. The triumph of free trade and of free exchanges is considered complete. The new Columbus departs, fully bent upon his great enterprise, when, lo!—the bubble bursts: Wagstaff does not possess a cock-boat, much less a fleet of ocean steamers, and so his part is played, and he quits the stage.

Nor does the exciting drama end here; for, as if to give additional interest to the closing scene, before the curtain falls, a great lawyer appears, and, in the eager spirit of chivalry which he is determined to display, he thrusts his